

Law Offices WEBSTER, CHAMBERLAIN & BEAN

1747 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, N.W.

Washington, D.C. 20006 (202) 785-9500 Fax: (202) 835-0243

GEORGE D. WEBSTER (1921-1996)
OF COUNSEL
J. COLEMAN BEAN
CHARLES E. CHAMBERLAIN

ARTHUR L. HEROLD
ALAN P DYE
EDWARD D COLEMAN
KENT MASTERSON BROWN
BURKETT VAN KIRK
FRANK M. NORTHAM
JOHN W HAZARO, JR
CHARLES M WATKINS
HUGH K WEBSTER
DAVID P GOCH
BRENLEY LOCKE ELIAS
DAVID L. FINCH*

April 7, 1997

BY HAND DELIVERY

Dawn M. Odrowski, Esq. Office of General Counsel Federal Election Commission Sixth Floor 999 E Street, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20463

Re: MUR 3774

Dear Ms. Odrowski:

Enclosed are the responses and objections of The National Right to Work Committee to the interrogatories and requests for documents that were submitted to the Committee in connection with MUR 3774.

Sincerely,

Frank M. Northam

Enclosures FMN/ctb

cc: Richard J. Clair, Esq.

In the Matter of) Unknown Respondent) Witness Subpoena) MUR 3774

RESPONSE TO SUBPOENA

BEFORE THE FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION

The National Right to Work Committee (NRTWC), hereby responds to the Subpoena to Produce Documents/Order to Submit Written Answers served upon NRTWC in the above-referenced MUR, following the numbering order used in the Subpoena/Order.

INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS

The subject checks relate to activities from more than four years ago. NRTWC has experienced changes in personnel over those years, and documents may no longer exist, if they ever existed. Nonetheless, NRTWC, with the assistance of counsel and staff, has conducted a diligent search for documents and facts, and responds on the basis of information so gathered.

INTERROGATORIES

- 1.a. We cannot determine who "received" checks 1452 and 1455 from Coalitions for America. They were probably "received" by mail.
 - 1.b. We cannot determine who deposited the checks.
 - 1.c. The checks were contributions to NRTWC.
- 1.d. As best can be determined at this time, the officers, directors, employees or other persons connected with NRTWC in 1992 who had knowledge of the checks were Reed Larson, President, Karl Gallant, Vice President, and Maureen Fallon, who worked in the accounting department.
- 1.e. The checks were deposited in NRTWC's general operations checking account and used for general operating purposes.
 - 2. No.

¹ NRTWC notes that it was misnamed in the Subpoena/Order as "National Right to Work Committee, Inc." NRTWC's correct legal name is "The National Right to Work Committee".

- 3. NRTWC objects to this interrogatory and refuses to answer it on the following grounds:
- a. NRTWC is a citizens coalition which opposes compulsory unionism. Such advocacy with respect to public policy issues is a form of speech and association protected by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. See, Buckley v. Valeo, 424 U.S. 1, 14-23 (1976). Interrogatory 3 threatens and chills the exercise of First Amendment rights by NRTWC and its supporters.
- b. Interrogatory 3 is an unauthorized fishing expedition, seeking documents and information on NRTWC's activities, rather than the activities of others, such that a reasonable person would conclude that the Commission is exceeding and misusing its investigative powers in an attempt to secure NRTWC's admission to one or more violations of the federal election laws, or documents and information with which to prove a violation by NRTWC. However, the Commission is not authorized to investigate suspected violations by NRTWC unless a complaint is first filed against NRTWC pursuant to 2 U.S.C. § 437g. FEC v. Machinists Non-Partisan Political League, 655 F.2d 380, 387-88 (D.C. Cir. 1981), cert. denied 454 U.S. 897. (Mere "official curiosity" does not suffice as a basis for Commission investigations. The Commission needs a signed, sworn, notarized complaint to commence an investigation.) Nor has NRTWC been informed of any "reason to believe" vote pursuant to 2 U.S.C. § 437g(a)(2) by which the Commission might be able to commence an investigation of NRTWC.
- c. The language of Interrogatory 3 is constitutionally vague and overbroad. For example, it requests information concerning activities "relating to" federal elections, including but not limited to communications or activities "containing the names(s) of any 1992 federal candidates." The phrase "relating to" is just as vague and overbroad as other phrases so declared by the U.S. Supreme Court. "Relative to," "for the purpose of influencing," and "in connection with" have all been given an "express advocacy" limiting construction by the Supreme Court to avoid constitutional vagueness and overbreadth. Buckley v. Valeo, 424 U.S. at 42-43 & 80; FEC v. Massachusetts Citizens for Life, 479 U.S. 238, 249 (1986). Furthermore, the simple fact that a communication "contains the name of federal candidates" as used in interrogatory 3, is wholly insufficient to bring it within the Commission's jurisdiction. To come within the Commission's jurisdiction, not only must a communication "clearly identify" a federal candidate, but it must also "expressly advocate" the candidate's election or defeat. Id.
- d. NRTWC and its supporters have a constitutional right to associate in private for the promotion of its cause. *Buckley*, 424 U.S. at 64-66. Interrogatory 3 threatens that First Amendment right without a compelling governmental interest. "[I]f the FEC lacks jurisdiction . . ., then no compelling interest for the subpoenaed information can possibly exist." *Machinists*, at 389.

Without waiving said objections, NRTWC answers that it did not engage in or finance any activities within the jurisdiction of the FEC in October-December 1992.

4. NRTWC is exempt from federal income tax under 26 U.S.C. § 501(c)(4).

PRODUCTION OF DOCUMENTS

- 1. All the documents responsive to request no. 1, which we have been able to find in a diligent search, are produced herewith.
 - 2. None.
- 3. Request no. 3 is objected to on the same grounds as interrogatory 3 is objected to. Without waiving said objections, NRTWC answers that there are no documents within the jurisdiction of the FEC for the period October-December 1992.
- 4. The requested bank statements for the account into which the subject checks were deposited, i.e., the general operating account, are produced herewith. Since the funds were used for general operating purposes and were intermingled with other general operating funds, there is no way to trace them to a particular payee's account. BE ADVISED: NRTWC's supporters have a First Amendment right to associate in private with NRTWC. NRTWC does not hereby waive that privacy right or consent to the FEC's obtaining donor information from the bank, but NRTWC asserts that privacy right for the benefit of its supporters, hereby objecting to any attempt of the FEC to obtain such donor information.
 - 5. NRTWC's IRS Form 990 for 1992 is produced herewith.

Respectfully submitted,

The National Right to Work Committee,

as to facts by its President:

Reed E. Larson, President

and as to objections by counsel:

Frank M. Northam

Webster, Chamberlain & Bean

1747 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Suite 1000

Washington, D.C. 20006

(202) 785-9500

VERIFICATION

Commonwealth of Virginia	
) SS:
County of Fairfax)
The foregoing Respon	nse To Subpoena was subscribed and sworn to before me, a Notary
Public in and for the Commo	nwealth of Virginia, by Reed E. Larson, President of The National
Right to Work Committee, v	who is personally known to me, on this day of April, 1997.
	Notary Public Virginia A. Smith
My commission expir	res: <u>December</u> 31, 1999.

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